had received U.S. aid to popularise new industrial policy; and

(b) if so, what are the details of Memorandum of Understanding signed in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) and (b) An agreement has been signed between Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) on 11-6-1992 for the grant of US dollar 1,137,000 by USAID to FICCI. The agreement provides that the purpose of the grant is to help FICCI in creating a conducive climate for supporting implementation of various economic reforms announced by Government of India by conducting Conferences/workshops focussed on the aims and benefits of the new economic policies. Under the agreement, the grant is also intended for identifying areas of common interest for Indo-US Cooperation in commercial activities and establishing linkages between Indian and US Organisations. The estimated duration of the proposed activities of FICCI for which grant is intended is about 18 months commencing from the date of signing of the agreement.

Collections of excise duty on man made fibre

1175. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is an additional levy of excise duty on man made fabrics in lieu on sales tax;

(b) whether it is also a fact that against the total annual budgeted amount of Rs. 550 crores only about Rs. 420 crores is collected, whereas there is potential of collection of Rs. 1,000/- crores as excise duty on man made fabrics;

(c) if so, what are the reasons for such huge gap in collection of additional excise duty;

(d) whether any responsibility has been fixed in this matter; and

(e) what are the details of steps taken to intensify collection of duty and plug the loopholes responsible for its evasion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Revised Budget Estimate in respect of man made fabrics for the year 1991-92 was Rs. 580 crores and the actual collection of revenue from man-made fabrics during the year 1991-92 has been provisionally placed at Rs. 570 crores which is close to the Revised Budget Estimate.

(c) to (e) Do not arise in view of (b) above.

Recruitment of SC/ST candidates in Banks functioning in Arunachal Pradesh

1176. SHRI NYODEK YONGGAM: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of nationalised bank branches functioning in the State of Arunachal Pradesh;

(b) whether the banks are following the guidelines issued by Government of India on reservation policy for employment of SC/ST of Arunachal Pradesh;

(c) if so, what is the total number of SC/ST candidates recruited in these banks in 1989-90, 1990-91 and 1991-92; and

(d) if no, SC/ST employee has been recruited, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) There are 49 branches of public sector banks in the State of Arunachal Pradesh.

(b) Yes Sir.

(c) and (d) The information regarding the total number of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates recruited in each year Statewise and Bank-wise is not maintained. However, a statement indicating bank-wise representation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the public sector banks as at the end of 31st December, 1990 is enclosed. [*See* Appendix CLXIV, Annexure No. 25]

Import of life saving drugs and equipment of official exchange rate

1177. SHRI SATCHIDANANDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in his budget speech, he assured that import of Life Saving Drugs and equipment will be permitted on official exchange rate;

(b) whether it is also a fact that import of all Life Saving Drugs and equipment are not permitted at the official exchange rate;

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(d) what action Government propose to take to permit such imports at official rate?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) Yes, Sir. In the budget speech it was proposed that 'the foreign exchange surrendered at official exchange rates will be available to meet the foreign exchange requirements of essential imports such as petroleum and oil products, fertilizers, defence and life saving drugs'.

(b) to (d) The import of drugs and equipments identified as life saving, are permitted at the official exchange rate. The list of such drugs and equipments is, however, kept under constant review the concerned authorities.

Conversion of stand by arrangement into extended fund facility by I.M.F.

1178. SHRI ASHIS SEN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the IMF will convert the stand-by arrangement into an extended fund facility arrangement for three years; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR):

(a) and (b) The Government intends to have discussions with IMF on a medium-term assistance programme including conversion of Stand-by Arrangement into Extended Fund Facility. It would be premature of judge the outcome these discussions.

Reduction in SCICI Financing to Shipping Sector

1179. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the S.C.I.C.I. has taken a decision to reduce financing to the shipping sector;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the S.C.I.C.I. is also reducing its stake in the fishery sector;

(d) if so, what are the details of S.C.I.C.I.'s plan to move to new sectors?